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CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM

Color Sergeant Fergus Elliott, 109th Pennsylvania, led unit at Peachtree Creek, Georgia, July 20, 1864

Private Edwin F. Jemison, 2nd Louisiana, fought and died at Malvern Hill, Virginia, July 1, 1862

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The CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM is part of the American Battlefield Protection Program. The program was established by Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, Jr., to preserve significant American battlefields.

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CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM

Each year, millions of people visit the Civil War parks, battlefields, monuments, and cemeteries administered by the National Park Service (NPS). Visitors often wonder if their ancestors fought or died at the sites they are visiting. That information exists, but getting it usually requires hours of research or a written request to the National Archives. The National Park Service, in cooperation with other interested organizations, is developing a CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM, which will be available to visitors at most of the Park Service's Civil War sites by 1994-95. The system will provide answers to some of their questions and will refer them to other sources for additional information.

Q *What will the* CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM *be?*

The system will include a computerized database containing very basic facts about soldiers who served on both sides during the Civil War; a list of regiments in both the Union and Confederate Armies; identifications and descriptions of some of the major battles of the war; references that identify the sources of the information in the database; and suggestions for where to find additional information. The facts about the soldiers will be entered from records that are indexed to many millions of other documents about Union and Confederate Civil War soldiers maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration. Additional information about soldiers, regiments, and battles, as well as prisoner-of-war records and cemetery records, will be added over time.

Q *What information will Civil War park visitors be able to obtain from the system?*

Initially, the CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM will contain 5.5 million names of soldiers who fought in the

Civil War, along with such information as whether the soldier was Confederate or Union and the soldier's regiment and rank. Historians have determined that approximately 3.5 million soldiers actually fought in the War; the records contain duplicates because some people served more than once and names were spelled or represented differently each time. Some soldiers even used aliases. The system will also identify the 7,000 regiments and units formed during the war; describe the major battles and skirmishes and identify the participating regiments and units; and provide the location of some of the soldiers buried in Civil War cemeteries managed by the Park Service.

Over time, the system will be expanded to provide additional information about individual soldiers; regimental histories; descriptions of more battles and skirmishes; more burial locations; and prisoner-of-war records. The system will identify the sources for all information in the database.

Q *Who is involved in developing the system?*

The National Park Service is managing the development of the system in conjunction with the American Battlefield Protection Program established by the Secretary of the Interior. In addition to the Park Service, the National Archives, the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), and the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) are contributing to the initial development of the CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM. The GSU is developing the data entry software and will work with the Park Service on future activities; the National Archives is supplying microfilm copies of the 5.5 million Master Index records of the Civil War soldiers; and the FGS will coordinate volunteers to perform the data entry for the CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS index. Other organizations also will be working with the Park Service on the project.

Q *When will visitors be able to use the system?*

The FGS expects the entry of information for the CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS index to take about three years. The Park Service plans to have the system operational by 1994-95. At that time most of the

NPS-managed Civil War sites will be equipped with microcomputers to provide information to visitors.

Q *How will the system work?*

Each NPS-managed Civil War park will have one or more microcomputers available for use. At some sites a park interpreter may actually operate the system; at others the visitor may do it. The system will be easy to operate and will require no special computer knowledge. All the visitor has to know is the name of a soldier. If the visitor knows only the last name, the system will provide information about all the soldiers with that last name. (Even if the visitor knows both the first and the last names, the system may find more than one record and then display all the types of records that it has for the name entered.) It will identify and allow access to information about the regiment in which the selected soldier served and battles in which that regiment fought. If there is additional information available in the database, the visitor will be told how to view it. The system will also tell the visitor how to request copies of the actual National Archives records for their selected soldier names.

Q *Where, and how, can I obtain information about Civil War soldiers now?*

The National Archives headquarters houses all of the original service records of Civil War soldiers. Until the CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM is operational, members of the public who want to obtain this information must go to the Archives or write to the following address and request form NATF–80:

Reference Services Branch (NNIR)
National Archives and Record Service
8th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20408

Also, Bertram Hawthorne Groene's *Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1973) is an easy-to-read, easy-to-follow guide to sources of information for anyone who wants to do individual research.

Photos: Library of Congress and U.S. Army Military History Institute

CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM

PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

Members of the public may volunteer to participate in this project by entering the basic data from copies of the National Archives documents. Initially, the data entry work will be accomplished at specific locations around the country, such as the National Archives Regional Branches; in the future, data may also be entered on IBM-compatible home computers.

If you would like information on how you can volunteer to perform data entry for the National Park Service's CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS SYSTEM, please complete and mail this pre-addressed reply card to the Federation of Genealogical Societies. The National Park Service is grateful for your interest in this historic project.

_____

NAME

_____

ADDRESS

_____

CITY, STATE, ZIP

If you are willing to work on your own computer, please complete the following:

Computer experience: _____

_____

_____

Type of computer and disk drive capacity:

_____

Civil War Areas
MANAGED BY THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

VIRGINIA
Appomattox Court House National Historical Park
Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields
Memorial National Military Park
Fredericksburg National Cemetery
Manassas National Battlefield Park
Petersburg National Battlefield
Poplar Grove (Petersburg) National Cemetery
Richmond National Battlefield Park
Yorktown National Cemetery

WEST VIRGINIA
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Civil War-Related Sites

ARKANSAS
Arkansas Post National Memorial

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Ford's Theater National Historic Site
Frederick Douglas National Historic Site
Fort Stevens (Rock Creek Park)

FLORIDA
Forts Barrancas, Pickens and Massachusetts
(Gulf Islands National Seashore)

ILLINOIS
Lincoln Home National Historic Site

INDIANA
Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial

KANSAS
Fort Scott National Historic Site

KENTUCKY
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site
Cumberland Gap National Historical Park

MARYLAND
Fort Washington Park
Fort McHenry National Monument

MISSOURI
Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site

NEW YORK
General Grant National Memorial

TENNESSEE
Andrew Johnson National Historic Site

VIRGINIA
Colonial National Historical Park (Yorktown)

Civil War Areas
MANAGED BY THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Major Sites and Cemeteries

ARKANSAS
Pea Ridge National Military Park

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Battleground National Cemetery

FLORIDA
Fort Jefferson National Monument

GEORGIA
Andersonville National Historic Site
Andersonville National Cemetery
Chickamauga and Chattanooga
National Military Park
Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park
Fort Pulaski National Monument

LOUISIANA
Chalmette National Cemetery

MARYLAND
Antietam National Battlefield
Antietam (Sharpsburg) National Cemetery
Monocacy National Battlefield

MISSISSIPPI
Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site
Tupelo National Battlefield
Vicksburg National Military Park
Vicksburg National Cemetery

MISSOURI
Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

NEW MEXICO
Glorieta Pass Battlefield
(Pecos National Historical Park)

PENNSYLVANIA
Gettysburg National Military Park
Gettysburg National Cemetery

SOUTH CAROLINA
Fort Sumter National Monument

TENNESSEE
Fort Donelson National Battlefield
Fort Donelson (Dover) National Cemetery
Shiloh National Military Park
Shiloh (Pittsburg Landing) National Cemetery
Stones River National Battlefield
Stones River (Murfreesboro) National Cemetery

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SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84110-3385

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